

UTILITY PATENT APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.53(b)

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Box PATENT APPLICATION

Washington D.C. 20231

Case Docket No.: LGS/P-175

Submitted herewith for filing is the patent application of
 INVENTOR OR APPLICATION IDENTIFIER: Ho Hyun KIM
 TEST MODE SETUP CIRCUIT FOR MICROCONTROLLER UNIT

Enclosed are:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 14 pages of specification, claims, abstract</p> <p>2. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 sheets of FORMAL drawing.</p> <p>3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 pages of newly executed Declaration & Power of Attorney (original).</p> <p>4. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Priority Claimed.</p> <p>5. <input type="checkbox"/> Small Entity Statement.</p> <p>6. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement, Form PTO-1449 and reference.</p> <p>10. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Authorization under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a)(3).</p> <p>11. <input type="checkbox"/> Other:</p> | <p>7. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assignment Papers for LG Semicon Co., Ltd. (cover sheet, assignment & assignment fee).</p> <p>8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Certified copy of Korean Patent Application No. 17228/1998, filed May 13, 1998.</p> <p>9. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Two (2) return postcards.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stamp & Return with Courier.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prepaid Postcard-Stamped Filing Date & Returned with Unofficial Serial Number.</p> |
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CLAIMS AS FILED

For	No. Filed		No. Extra	Rate	Fee
Total Claims	17	- 20	0	X \$18.00	
Indep. Claims	3	- 3	0	X \$78.00	
Multiple Dependent Claims (If applicable)				X \$260.00	
				BASIC FEE	\$760.00
				TOTAL FILING FEE	\$760.00

- ☐ This is a Continuation-in-part (CIP) of prior application No: _____ filed _____. Incorporation By Reference-The entire disclosure of the prior application is considered as being part of the disclosure of the accompanying application and is hereby incorporated by reference therein.
- ☐ Amend the specification by inserting before the first line the sentence:
 --This application is a continuation-in-part of Application Serial No. _____ filed _____.--
- ☒ A check in the amount of \$760.00 (Check # 7007) is attached.
- ☐ Please charge my Deposit Account No. 16-0607 in the amount of \$__. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.
- ☒ The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of the following fees associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 16-0607. A duplicate copy is enclosed.
- ☒ Any additional filing fees required under 37 C.F.R. 1.16.
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- ☒ Any patent application processing fees under 37 C.F.R. 1.17.
- ☒ Any filing fees under 37 C.F.R. 1.16 for presentation of extra claims.

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U.S. PTO
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APPLICATION FOR UNITED STATES LETTERS PATENT

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TITLE: TEST MODE SETUP CIRCUIT FOR MICROCONTROLLER UNIT

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DOCKET NO.: LGS/P-175

TEST MODE SETUP CIRCUIT FOR MICROCONTROLLER UNIT

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a semiconductor device, and in particular, to a test circuit for a microcontroller unit (MCU).

2. Background of the Related Art

Fig. 1 is a schematic block diagram that illustrates a related art test mode setup circuit for a microcontroller unit (MCU). The related art test mode setup circuit is composed of a test pin 10.1 for receiving a test signal, a reset pin 10.2 for receiving a reset signal, a clock pin 10.3 for receiving a clock signal CLK and a test mode related circuit 10 for outputting a test mode related signal to an internal circuit when receiving the test signal over the test pin 10.1. The clock signal CLK is preferably generated using an oscillator (not shown).

In a normal mode, the test mode related circuit 10 is not connected with an internal circuit of the MCU. After a test mode is established, that is when a test signal inputted over the test pin 10.1 becomes active, the test mode related circuit 10 outputs the test mode related signal to the internal circuit to place the internal circuit in the test mode.

However, a MCU having a small number of pins has been produced in large numbers. Accordingly, as described above, the related art test mode setup circuit has various disadvantages. When the test pin is added to the MCU having the small number of pins in addition to essentially required pins such as the reset pin, a VDD pin, a VSS pin and a clock pin, a number of pins that are available for a user is decreased. Further, since the test pin is a pin that the user does not generally use (i.e., in normal operations), usability and applicability of the MCU is deteriorated.

The above references are incorporated by reference herein where appropriate for appropriate teachings of additional or alternative details, features and/or technical background.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

An object of the present invention is to provide a test circuit for a MCU that substantially obviates one or more of the problems caused by limitations and disadvantages of the related art.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a test mode setup circuit for a MCU having a small number of pins.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a test circuit for a MCU that sets a test mode without adding a separate test pin.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a test mode setup circuit for a MCU that sets a test mode using only a reset pin and a clock pin.

To achieve at least the above-identified objects in a whole or in parts there is provided a test circuit for a microcontroller according to the present invention that includes a first pin receiving a first signal; a second pin receiving a second signal; and a test signal generating circuit that generates a test signal in response to a logical combination of the first signal and the second signal.

To further achieve at least the above-described objects in a whole or in parts there is provided a microcontroller unit according to the present invention that includes a clock pin that receives a clock signal; a reset pin that receives a reset signal; a test mode counter that is set and reset based on the clock signal and the reset signal to count the reset signal; and a decoder that activates a test mode flag when a count value of the test mode counter reaches a prescribed value.

To further achieve at least the above-described objects in a whole or in parts there is provided a test mode setup circuit for a microcontroller unit according to the present invention that includes a clock pin that receives a clock signal; a reset pin that receives a reset signal; a test signal generating circuit that counts the reset signal in accordance with a combination of the clock signal and the reset signal to generate a test signal, wherein the test signal generating circuit includes, a logic gate that logically processes the clock signal

and the reset signal, a test mode counter that is set and reset in accordance with an output
signal from the logic gate to count the reset signal, and a decoder that outputs the test
signal when a count value from the test mode counter is a prescribed count value; and a
test mode related circuit operated by the clock signal and the reset signal that enters an
5 internal circuit into a test mode in accordance with the test signal from the test signal
generating circuit.

Additional advantages, objects, and features of the invention will be set forth in
part in the description which follows and in part will become apparent to those having
ordinary skill in the art upon examination of the following or may be learned from
10 practice of the invention. The objects and advantages of the invention may be realized
and attained as particularly pointed out in the appended claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The invention will be described in detail with reference to the following drawings
15 in which like reference numerals refer to like elements, and wherein:

Fig. 1 is a block diagram of a related art test mode setup circuit for an MCU;

Fig. 2 is a block diagram of a preferred embodiment of a test circuit for an MCU
according to the present invention; and

Figs. 3A through 3D are diagrams showing input and output timing waveforms of elements in Fig. 2.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

5 Fig. 2 is a schematic block diagram showing a preferred embodiment of a test mode setup circuit according to the present invention. As shown in Fig. 2, the test mode setup circuit for a microcontroller unit (MCU) or the like preferably includes an OR gate 20, a test mode counter 30 and a decoder 40. The preferred embodiment of the test mode setup circuit further includes a test mode related circuit 10, and only includes a clock pin 10.3 and a reset pin 10.2 as input pins.

10 The OR gate 20 ORs a clock signal CLK that is inputted to the clock pin 10.3, and a reset signal RESET that is inputted to the reset pin 10.2. The OR gate 20 transmits an output signal to a reset terminal RSTb of the test mode counter 30.

15 The test mode counter 30 is preferably set or reset in accordance with the output signal from the OR gate 20 received via the reset terminal RSTb and preferably counts the reset signal RESET that is inputted over the reset pin 10.2. The test mode counter 30 is preferably reset by a low-level signal. However, the present invention is not intended to be so limited.

The decoder 40 receives a test count value from the test mode counter 30 and activates a test mode flag when the input count value becomes a prescribed test mode count value. The test mode related circuit 10 outputs a test mode related signal to the internal circuit (not shown) in accordance with the active test mode flag from the decoder 40.

Operations of the preferred embodiment of the test mode setup circuit for the MCU of the present invention will now be described. In a normal mode, the internal circuit (not shown) is synchronized for operations by the clock signal CLK, which is inputted using the clock pin 10.3.

In a test mode, when the clock signal CLK, which is inputted using the clock pin 10.3, becomes a high level as shown in Fig. 3A, the operation of the internal circuit is suspended, and the test mode counter 30 is set by a high-level signal outputted from the OR gate 20. Accordingly, the test mode counter 30 receives the reset signal RESET, as shown in Fig. 3B, which is preferably input to a clock terminal over the reset pin 10.2.

The test mode counter 30 preferably counts a rising edge or a falling edge of the reset signal to output a count value as shown in Fig. 3C. The decoder 40 receives the count value from the test mode counter 30 and activates the test mode flag when the input count value from the test mode counter 30 is a predescribed test mode count value.

For example, assume that the test mode count value that has been previously set up in the decoder 40 is hexadecimal FF. The decoder 40 disables the test mode flag when receiving any other count values ($\phi 0$, $\phi 1$, $\phi 2$, $\phi 3$, ..., FD, FE) from the test mode counter 30 and enables the test mode flag when the count value FF is received from the test mode counter 30.

Accordingly, the test mode related circuit 10 outputs a test mode related signal to the internal circuit (not shown) in accordance with the enabled test mode flag to enter the internal circuit into the test mode. As shown in Figs. 3A-3D, the internal circuit preferably enters the test mode from the time (t).

In addition, with the preferred embodiment of the present invention, it becomes possible to set up a test mode count value of the test mode counter 30 in various ways and to achieve various test modes by decoding various test mode count values.

As described above, the preferred embodiment of the test mode setup circuit for the MCU according to the present invention has various advantages. The test mode setup circuit sets up the test mode using only the reset pin and the clock pin without having a separate test pin. Thus, the preferred embodiment of a test mode setup circuit for a MCU or the like can be used for the MCU having a reduced or small number of pins. Further, various test modes can be achieved by which the test mode count value of the test mode counter is decoded in different ways.

5

The foregoing embodiments are merely exemplary and are not to be construed as limiting the present invention. The present teaching can be readily applied to other types of apparatuses. The description of the present invention is intended to be illustrative, and not to limit the scope of the claims. Many alternatives, modifications, and variations will be apparent to those skilled in the art. In the claims, means-plus-function clauses are intended to cover the structures described herein as performing the recited function and not only structural equivalents but also equivalent structures.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A test circuit for a microcontroller unit, comprising:
- a first pin receiving a first signal;
 - a second pin receiving a second signal; and
 - a test signal generating circuit that generates a test signal in response to a
- 5 logical combination of the first signal and the second signal.

2. The circuit of claim 1, wherein the test signal generating circuit comprises:
- a logic circuit that logically processes the first signal and the second signal;
 - a counter that is enabled and disabled based on an output signal from the
- 5 logic circuit, wherein the test mode counter uses the second signal as a counting signal
- when enabled; and
- a decoder that outputs the test signal when a count value from the counter
- reaches a prescribed count value.

3. The circuit of claim 2, wherein the test mode counter is disabled and reset
- when the output signal from the logic circuit is a low level.

4. The circuit of claim 3, wherein the logic circuit is an OR-gate, and wherein the first and second signals are a clock signal, and a reset signal, respectively.

5. The circuit of claim 1, further comprising:

a test mode related circuit operated by the first signal and the second signal;

and

an internal circuit that enters a test mode in accordance with the test signal from the test signal generating circuit.

6. The circuit of claim 5, wherein the internal circuit operates in a second mode when the count value reaches a second prescribed count value.

7. The circuit of claim 1, wherein the first signal is a high level in the test mode.

8. A microcontroller unit having a test mode setup circuit, the test mode setup circuit comprising:

a clock pin that receives a clock signal;

a reset pin that receives a reset signal;

a test mode counter that is set and reset based on the clock signal and the reset signal, wherein the set test mode counter counts the reset signal; and

a decoder that receives a count value from the test mode counter and activates a test mode flag when the count value reaches a prescribed value.

9. The microcontroller unit of claim 8, further comprising a test mode related circuit operated by the clock signal and the reset signal that outputs a test signal based on the test mode flag.

10. The microcontroller unit of claim 9, further comprising an internal circuit that enters a test mode in accordance with the test signal.

11. The microcontroller unit of claim 8, wherein the clock signal is a high level in the test mode.

12. The microcontroller of claim 8, further comprising:
a clock pin receiving a clock signal;
a reset pin receiving a reset signal; and
an OR gate ORing the clock signal and the reset signal.

13. The microcontroller unit of claim 8, further comprising a logic gate that logically combines the clock signal and the reset signal.

14. The microcontroller unit of claim 13, wherein the test mode counter is reset when an output value from the logic-gate is a low level, and wherein the logic-gate is an OR gate.

15. A test mode setup circuit for a microcontroller unit, comprising:

- a clock pin that receives a clock signal;
- a reset pin that receives a reset signal;
- a test signal generator that counts the reset signal in accordance with a logical combination of the clock signal and the reset signal to generate a test signal, wherein the test signal generator comprises,
 - a logic gate that logically processes the clock signal and the reset signal,
 - a test mode counter that is set and reset in accordance with an output signal from the logic gate to count the reset signal and output a count signal, and

a decoder that outputs a test signal when the count signal from the test mode counter is a prescribed value; and

a test mode related circuit operated by the clock signal and the reset signal that enters an internal circuit into a test mode in accordance with the test signal from the test signal generator.

16. The circuit of claim 15, wherein the clock signal is a high level in the test mode, wherein the logic-gate is an OR-gate, and wherein the test mode counter is reset when an output value from the OR-gate is a low level.

17. The circuit of claim 15, wherein the test mode related circuit enters the internal circuit into a second mode when the count signal reaches a second prescribed value.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

[illegible]

FIG.1
BACKGROUND ART

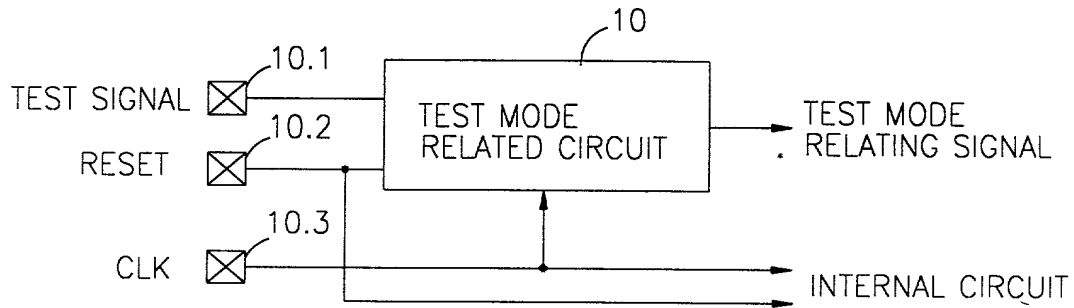


FIG.2

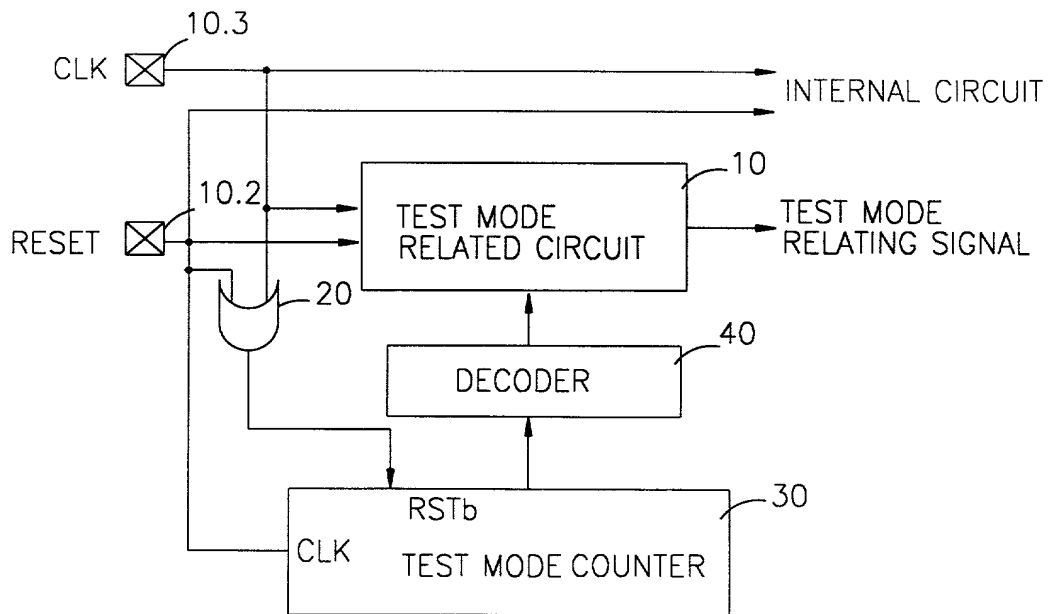


FIG.3A

CLK

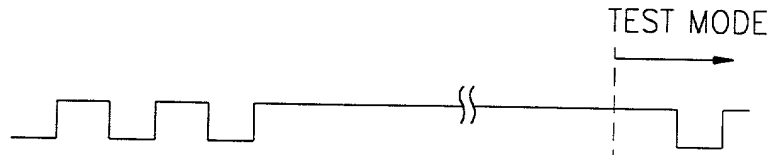


FIG.3B

RESET



FIG.3C

COUNTING
VALUE

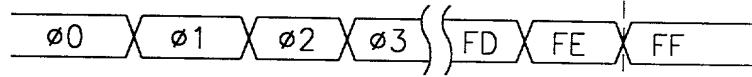


FIG.3D

TEST MODE
FLAG



TEST MODE

t

Docket No.: LGS/P-175

DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office and citizenship are as stated below next to my name,

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled TEST MODE SETUP CIRCUIT FOR MICROCONTROLLER UNIT, the specification of which

[X] is attached hereto [] was filed on _____ as Application Serial No. _____ and was amended on _____ (if applicable)

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is known to me to be material to patentability in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56(a).

I hereby claim foreign priority or provisional application benefits under Title 35, United States Code, Section 119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or provisional application(s) listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate, or provisional application(s) having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

Prior Foreign Application(s) or U.S. Provisional Application(s):			Priority Claimed	
Number	Country	Day/Month/Year	Yes	No
17228/1998	Republic of Korea	13 May 1998	X	

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, Section 120 of any United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, Section 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56(a) which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

Prior U. S. Application(s):		Status: Patented, Pending, Abandoned
Serial No.	Filing Date	

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) and/or agent(s): Daniel Y.J. Kim, Registration No. 36,186 and Mark L. Fleshner, Registration No. 34,596; Carl R. Wesolowski, Registration No. 40,372, John C. Eisenhart, Registration No. 38,128, and Rene A. Vazquez, Registration No. 38,647, all of

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with full power of substitution and revocation, to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith, and all future correspondence should be addressed to them.

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